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STATE FOR PM/DTCC - BLUE LANTERN COORDINATOR (SABATINI) AND NEA/ELA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETTC](#) [KOMC](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: BLUE LANTERN PRE LICENSE CHECK CASE 05-050070921

Sensitive but unclassified. Not for internet distribution.

REF: SECSTATE 151365

¶11. (SBU) EconOff met with Suleiman Aqarbeh, Security Director at the Le Royal Hotel Amman, on November 8. At the site visit, Aqarbeh verified his hotel's order for one Fido XT Handheld Explosives Detector plus Starter Kit, with a license value of USD 24,012. Aqarbeh confirmed that he placed the order with the help of the DAHAB Company. He said he is currently working with hotel management, including General Manager Antony Paton, to place an order for a second Fido detector. Aqarbeh showed EconOff the main hotel entrance and road where the equipment would be used.

¶12. (SBU) Aqabeh said he is working to improve the security situation in the hotel. He explained that this explosive detection equipment will be used in conjunction with already-acquired cameras, infrared cameras, and bollards to screen vehicles and allow the hotel to reopen its parking garage which has been closed since the 2005 Amman hotel bombings. He said the equipment could also be used for baggage and guests. Aqarbeh researched and tested multiple screening devices, in consultation with Jordanian police, Special Forces and intelligence officers before selecting the Fido detector based on speed, accuracy, and portability. He said Le Royal would be the first hotel in Jordan to use this equipment.

#### Background on Amman Hotel Bombings

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¶13. (U) On November 9, 2005, a series of three coordinated hotel bombings in Amman killed 60 people, including Americans, and injured 115 others. Al Qaeda in Iraq took responsibility. Pedestrian suicide bombers wearing explosive vests carried the bombs into the hotels. Since the bombings, hotels in Jordan, particularly four- and five-star hotels like Le Royal, have increased their security procedures significantly. In addition to hotel security procedures, Jordanian security forces are also assigned to hotels with a significant number of foreign customers.

#### Comment

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¶14. (SBU) Aqabeh was extremely cooperative, and is eager for equipment approval so that he can improve the security of Le Royal hotel and open its garage. Post believes this equipment will be put to excellent use; will improve the security of the hotel and of its often American guests; and is entirely consistent with the hotel's business. Embassy Amman has worked closely with this hotel, which has an excellent reputation, on security questions for its own events including an upcoming Marine Ball. Post is confident of the legitimacy of the transaction and the reliability of the hotel involved.

Visit Amman's Classified Website at  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/amman>

HALE